“The Year of Shakespeare”

This year we celebrate the works of Shakespeare through our mainstage productions of Macbeth and The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged) (revised) (again). 2023 is the 400th anniversary of the First Folio, and, incidentally, the first full publication of the infamous “Scottish Play.”

“A drum, a drum, Macbeth doth come!”

What better way to celebrate the 400th anniversary than bringing the tragic Macbeth back to the MU stage? Shakespeare’s play is masterfully crafted to tell a cautionary tale of one man’s downfall and the ensuing spiral. The themes and motifs that the Bard uses to tell this story are as relevant today as they were 400 years ago—ambition, honor, loyalty, pride, selfishness, and the influence of things beyond our understanding. I’ve always viewed the three witches, or the Weyard Sisters as they are called in the script, as representatives of the mythical fates, influencing life this way and that. In my adaptation of this play, I’ve expanded the witches from three to nine and have worked with my talented cast to release them from the more earthbound archetypes we may be used to. In today’s production they serve as a thread that ties our physical world to the supernatural world of fate. One that mysteriously influences (or does it?) this way and that, perhaps for good, perhaps for not. Perhaps twisting someone’s noble ambitions into the start of something more sinister.

Macbeth’s tragic downfall was not in his ambition, his honor, or even his pride, but in allowing a small seed of darkness—regardless from whence it came—to take root and grow into something beyond his control or even his will to control it. It is easy for us to label Macbeth as a “tyrant,” but it is vital for us to recognize his humanity—the same capable humanity that is at the core of each of us. Shakespeare knew this—hence this tragic, cautionary tale was written.

Let us recognize our shared humanity and choose to grow the light within us and around us, because sooner or later… “something wicked this way comes.”

-Jonathan Strayer, Director
SPECIAL THANKS

Dr. Daniel A Wubah, 15th President of Millersville University
The Council of Trustees, and the President’s Cabinet
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UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS

Millersville University Theatre Presents…

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare

February 22–24 & February 29–March 2, 2024 | Rafters Theatre | Dutcher Hall
Directed by Jonathan Strayer
Auditions on November 27th & 28th
More info at https://www.millersville.edu/theatre

The All-Campus Musical Organization Presents…

Big Fish

March 21-24 | Clair Performance Hall | Winter Visual & Performing Arts Center
Directed by Kat Thorpe
Auditions on November 16th–18th
More info at https://www.instagram.com/muacmo

The Kennedy Center

The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by David M. Rubenstein.

Special thanks to The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust for supporting the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts’ Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.

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Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered at the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.